



Report of : Head of Service – School Access

Meeting: Admissions Forum

Date of meeting: 15 June 2011

SUBJECT: Results of the Annual Consultation 2011

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

To advise the Admission Forum of the outcome of the consultation and the determined admission arrangements in the City.

2.0 Background Information

A consultation document was sent out on 1 December 2010 with a closing date of 4 February 2011 to all schools in Leeds, all neighbouring Local Authorities, the Church of England and Catholic Diocesan Boards, all councillors and relevant trade unions. The Leeds Admission Forum were advised of the content of the consultation at their meeting on 16 November 2010, consulted through the sub committee, and collectively consulted at their meeting on 1 March 2011. All responses were summarized and presented to the Executive Board of Leeds City Council on 30 March 2011 who determined the final arrangements.

The consultation on the proposed admission arrangements included a proposal to hold waiting lists for a whole academic year, and asked for views on the sibling priority. Additionally there were a small number of requests to changes to admission numbers. Other than minor amendments to the timetable there were no other changes to the co-ordinated scheme.

3.0 Main Issues

Coordinated Scheme – primary annual cycle

The consultation on the primary coordinated scheme outlined the statutory national closing date for primary applications, of 15 January, and the requirement to coordinate with other local authorities. The introduction of a national closing date means that Leeds is no longer able to make offers to parents for primary school on 1 March and the new offer date will be 20 April 2012. All respondents agreed with the proposed primary coordinated scheme. Following consultation on holding in year waiting lists, the waiting lists will no longer close on 31 December but will remain open until 31 July 2013.

Coordinated Scheme – secondary annual cycle

The consultation on the secondary coordinated scheme outlined the statutory national closing date for applications of 31 October. The national offer day remains unchanged at 1 March. All respondents agreed with the proposed coordinated scheme. Following consultation on holding in year waiting lists, the waiting lists will no longer close on 31 December but will remain open until 31 July 2013.

In year waiting lists.

The majority of respondents were in favour of the waiting lists being held for an academic year. We will therefore hold names on waiting lists until 31 July each year. Waiting lists will then be closed and

parents will need to re-apply if they still wish to be considered for a school.

Consultation on the sibling priority

We consulted on this matter now as the number of young people applying for secondary school in 2012 will be one of our lowest. For the past two years all young people who have asked for their nearest secondary school have been able to be offered a place there. It is likely that this will be the case in 2012. Consequently any change to the sibling rule for secondary would be unlikely to have any significant impact in 2012. However those applying during a time when they are likely to get into a more distant school, would also be aware that any siblings they have that will follow, may not receive the higher priority if it is not their nearest school. It would allow parents applying in 2012 to be aware of the future effect of a policy change without being impacted at the time.

We asked separately about both applications to primary and to secondary schools in relation to the sibling link. Although there was quite a mixed response it was felt that there was merit to retaining the sibling link in its current form for the time being. The criteria will therefore remain unchanged for entry in September 2012.

Aided and Foundation Schools and academies

The majority of academies that have converted from community schools have chosen to continue with the same admissions criteria as the Local Authority, at least in the first instance. Likewise the Foundation schools that have converted have chosen to continue with the same policy. There have been no significant proposals for changes to admission policies in the City. Many policies notably do not state how they will handle late applications and we have contacted those schools to advise that they must include a statement on this to avoid confusion.

4.0 Conclusions

Waiting lists will, in future, be held for all year groups for the academic year, for all community schools. The waiting lists will be closed at the end of the summer term each year and will parents will have to reapply if they still wish to seek a transfer to another school. For applications for Reception and year 7 the waiting lists will be held from the deadline for requests after the offer day, throughout the summer before they begin their new schools and then on until to the end of the summer term at the end of the academic year.

There are no other changes to the admissions criteria for community schools.